

Meeting Minutes
February 10, 2016
(RIDEM, Room 300)

In attendance: Janet Coit, DEM, Council Chair
Michael DiBiase, DOA
Danny Musher, OER
Michelle Burnett, EMA
Julia Gold, HEALTH
Jared Rhodes, Statewide Planning
Meredith Brady, DOT
James Boyd, CRMC

Director Coit (DEM) opened the meeting at approximately 9:35 AM. She briefly reviewed the agenda, and noted that Vice-Chair Gold was unavailable for today's meeting. Danny Musher (OER) is attending in her place.

The first order of business was the minutes from the January 13, 2016 meeting. A motion to accept the minutes was made and unanimously approved.

Director Coit (DEM) offered some short introductory remarks about: 1) the Governor's Lead-By-Example executive order from December and OER's presentation at the last EC4 meeting; 2) continuing to explore a "transportation" focused upcoming EC4 council meeting; 3) the Governor's recently rolled out budget, including the \$35M Green Economy Bond proposal and \$100,000 for URI to help with municipal resiliency; 4) the need to complete the council's annual report in May; and 5) the US Supreme Court's recent decision concerning the Clean Power Plan (DEM/OER's March 11th Clean Power Plan community workshop will go on as scheduled).

Jared Rhodes (Statewide Planning) offered an update on the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). Jared invited people to reach out to him directly if they have ideas they would like to discuss concerning the program.

Director Coit (DEM) turned the attention of the Council to the 3 presentations for today's meeting – James Boyd from CRMC, Leah Bamberger from the City of Providence Sustainability Office, and Julia Gold from the RI Department of Health.

James Boyd (CRMC) updated the Council on the following topics: 1) CRMC adoption of Section 145 Amendments addressing NOAA sea level rise curves and STORMTOOLS; 2) new/updated CRMC Shoreline Change Maps for Washington County; 3) STORMTOOLS layers (including the new 7 ft. SLR layer) are now on RIGIS as is "STORMTOOLS for Municipalities"; 4) the Coastal Environmental Risk Index (CERI) to assess the risk that structures and infrastructure face from storm surges, including flooding and the associated wave environment, in the presence of sea level rise (SLR), and shoreline erosion; 5) an update on the Pawtuxet River Modeling Project (being funded with \$175,000 HUD grant administered by RI OHCD); and 6) the upcoming Beach SAMP stakeholder meeting on May 3rd (guest speaker Michael Oppenheimer). At the conclusion of the presentation, members of the Council offered comments/questions regarding how these tools can and will assist municipalities, assistance that can flow to municipalities to help them think further about vulnerabilities, how RI needs to be "smarter" in how it spend its limited resources on resilience priorities, infrastructure limitations (e.g. shore parallel roads), the need for further traction in the Upper Bay on SLR/resilience efforts, the need to make these larger policy conversations "tangible" for municipal leaders, and how a pictures can be very compelling in promoting action (e.g. www.mycoast.org)

Leah Bamberger (City of Providence – Office of Sustainability) updated the Council on numerous ongoing projects and initiatives within the City of Providence: 1) Resilient PVD lab (focused on identifying strategies for making Providence more resilient to the impacts of climate change); 2) the Compact of Mayors signed by Mayor Elorza (focuses on GHG reduction goals, vulnerability assessments and adaptation planning); 3) how social justice and equity issues are being incorporated into the conversation; 4) how the city's recreational centers can be a key piece of its resiliency planning (e.g. food storage, off-grid energy supply); and 5) resiliency within the Port of Providence (e.g. the need to focus on how hospitals, shipping, business systems interact). Leah left the council with a few policy issues for consideration – encouraging government to “lead-by-example”, amending building codes (new vs. existing infrastructure), incorporating climate resiliency into comprehensive plans, and engaging the design & engineering community in identifying solutions. At the conclusion of the presentation, members of the Council offered comments/questions concerning the Providence Hurricane Barrier and connecting with OER's staff regarding microgrids.

Julia Gold (HEALTH – Climate Change Program Manager) explained that her program's mission is to anticipate and prepare for the human health effects related to local and global climate change. She updated the Council on a number of initiatives underway at HEALTH including: 1) Senior Resiliency Project (funded through OHCD CDBG-DR Hurricane Sandy Funds) which aims to assist facilities in preparing for scenarios through site specific energy resiliency audits and the development of all-hazards emergency plans which emphasize sheltering in place (rather than evacuation); 2) an upcoming video project focusing on Stories of Climate Change in RI (an educational piece aiming to utilize local faces/voices and highlight positive stories of adaptation); 3) the Northeast Regional Heat Collaborative which aims to evaluate the association between maximum daily heat index and daily emergency department (ED) visits & deaths in the Northeast (RI-ME-NH-VT) and inform/coordinate public health action at the local level (e.g. when to appropriately issue heat warnings). At the conclusion of the presentation, members of the Council offered comments/questions concerning reducing overall health impacts from heat given the temperature trends in the northeast.

Director Coit (DEM) invited Dr. Peter August (URI & Chair of the EC4 Science and Technical Advisory Board (STAB)) to provide an update on the work of the advisory council. Dr. August explained the desk of PowerPoint slides the group was preparing on topics such as biodiversity, sea level rise, warming air, warming water, storm frequency, and precipitation. He explained how he would like to engage the communications working group of the EC4 AB (Chair Sheila Dormody) to help finalize the slides.

Director Coit (DEM) announced a number of upcoming meetings: DEM/OER Clean Power Plan workshop on March 11th at 10:00AM (at DEM), GHG Technical Committee on February 23rd at 1:00PM (at DEM), and the next full EC4 meeting on March 9th at 9:30AM (at DEM).

During the public comment portion of the agenda:

- Caroline Karp (Brown University) requested that the public comment sessions be more interactive (allow for engagement on issues), if DEM or CRMC had identified “no build zones” in RI, and using the “watershed approach” when developing flood/inundation projects. In addition, she offered comments on the proposed \$35M Green Economy Bond and the State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP).
- Kendra Beaver (Save the Bay) commented on the need for DEM and CRMC to incorporate climate change into their core permitting and regulatory programs in an expedited manner.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 11:00 AM.